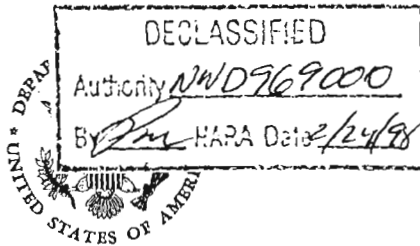


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3. IN CASE OF USG, AS SEEN FROM MY UNDOUBTEDLY DISTORTED LAGOSIAN PERSPECTIVE, BALANCE HAS FOR SOME TIME BEEN TILTED TOWARD INTERNAL PRESSURE. DOMESTIC SYMPATHY FOR IBOS HAS LED US TO WAVER FROM USUAL POST-WORLD WAR II STANCE OF GIVING FIRM POLITICAL SUPPORT TO FRIENDLY GOVERNMENTS AGAINST INTERNAL DISSIDENTS. WE HAVE BEEN PRONE TO ACCEPT AT FACE VALUE ALARMIST REPORTS OF CONDITIONS WITHIN REBEL TERRITORY EVEN THOUGH SUCH REPORTS HAVE LATER FREQUENTLY BEEN PROVED EXAGGERATED AND DESPITE FACT REBELS THEMSELVES DERIDE SUCH REPORTS WHEN IT SUITS THEIR PROPAGANDA PURPOSES TO DO SO. WE HAVE GIVEN MORAL AND MATERIAL SUPPORT TO JCA RELIEF AIRLIFT WHICH FMG HAS REPEATEDLY AND CORRECTLY DENOUNCED AS ILLEGAL VIOLATION OF ITS AIRSPACE. BASIC FACT ABOUT THIS AIRLIFT IS THAT IT WOULD NEVER HAVE BEGUN HAD FMG AT TIME HAD CAPABILITY TO PROTECT ITS AIRSPACE.

4. OF GREAT PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE IS FACT THAT IN ORDER TO DEAL WITH INTERNAL PRESSURES USG HAS OFTEN CONDUCTED ITS BUSINESS WITH FMG BY PRESS STATEMENTS. LATEST EXAMPLE IS SECRETARY'S STATEMENT OF JULY 2 REVEALING PROPOSALS WE HAD SAME DAY PUT TO FMG OFFICIALLY. MOST NIGERIANS REGARDED THIS AS PRESSURE TACTIC AND IN CLIMATE OF OPINION PREVAILING HERE IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR FMG TO AGREE TO PUBLICIZED PROPOSALS WHICH REQUIRED REVERSAL OF DECISIONS ALREADY TAKEN ON NIGHT AIRLIFT AND CROSS RIVER WATER ROUTE. ALTHOUGH FMG AND ITS OFFICIALS THEMSELVES FREQUENTLY TRY TO CONDUCT FOREIGN RELATIONS BY PRESS STATEMENTS, MORE SOPHISTICATED NIGERIANS EXCUSE THIS ON GROUNDS OF INEXPERIENCE. SAME NIGERIANS DO NOT UNDERSTAND HOW DIPLOMATICALLY EXPERIENCED USG CAN DO SAME THING AND CONSEQUENTLY BELIEVE WELL REMEMBERED SERIES OF USG PRESS STATEMENTS BEGINNING WITH RELEASE RE FMG REQUEST TO BUY ARMS IN JULY 1967 MUST BE CALCULATED ATTEMPTS TO PRESSURE AND HUMILIATE FMG.

5. NO FEW NIGERIANS NOW READ SINISTER SIGNIFICANCE INTO ALMOST ANYTHING USG DOES. THUS ANNOUNCEMENT OF MY OWN TRANSFER BEFORE SELECTION OF SUCCESSOR IS BEING INTERPRETED AS EITHER ATTEMPT TO PRESSURE FMG OR FORERUNNER OF USG POLICY SHIFT. SIMILARLY, NIGERIANS CONSIDER ASSISTANT SECRETARY PALMER'S TRANSFER TO ANOTHER AFRICAN COUNTRY AS DEMOTION AND THEREFORE ANOTHER SIG. OF CHANGING USG POLICY.

6. NIGERIANS ARE REACTING TO WHAT THEY SUSPECT USG IS DOING OR

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ABOUT TO DO TO THEM WITH SOME FEAR BUT MORE STUBBORNNESS  
AND RESENTMENT. MOST APPRECIATE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD RELATIONS WITH  
USG BUT ARE PREPARED SACRIFICE THESE RELATIONS IF MAINTAINING  
THEM SEEMS IN THEIR VIEW LIKELY TO INTERFERE WITH PUTTING DOWN  
REBELLION.

7. I GATHER USG IS AGAIN REVIEWING ITS OWN BALANCE BETWEEN  
INTERNAL PRESSURE AND EXTERNAL POLITICAL REALITIES. I HOPE  
FOREGOING OBSERVATIONS WILL BE PUT ON SCALES.

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MATHEWS

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